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the comparatively brief period subsequent to his arrival at manhood was given to literary pursuits, under circumstances which would have crushed a heart less courageous and hopeful. During his whole life he suffered from a severe and wasting illness, and his last sickness was one of great and protracted suffering. At the same time he often felt the pressure of pecuniary embarrassments; and it was when his spirits were weighed down by these depressing influences that most of his humorous pieces were written. It is no small praise to say, that under such influences he wrote nothing hollow or artificial, and that, notwithstanding his frequent exaggerations, it is easy to see behind all his writings a true, loving, and gentle heart.

In the preparation of these Memorials the larger part of the labor has devolved on his only daughter, Mrs. Broderip, who has discharged her self-imposed task in a manner worthy of much commendation. Her own recollections of her father were sufficiently distinct to enable her to record many incidents from her personal knowledge of them; and she has made a judicious selection from her father's letters and other manuscripts, though she has fallen into the common error of biographers, and has printed much that is trivial and uninteresting. Her narrative is composed with modesty and good taste; and the Preface and Notes by her brother throw considerable new light on Hood's life and character.

8. — *History, Theory, and Practice of the Electric Telegraph.* By GEORGE B. PRESCOTT, Superintendent of Electric Telegraph Lines. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1860. 12mo. pp. xii. and 468.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great change which the invention of the electric telegraph has wrought in all social and political relations, few persons are familiar with either its history or its practical operation; and the want of a compendious treatise on the subject has long been felt. This want it is Mr. Prescott's purpose to supply; and the most cursory examination of his book will show how well qualified he is for the task, and how skilfully he has discharged it. Many years of study and observation have made him a master of all the important principles and details, and he has stated the results of his investigations with a simplicity and clearness which render his volume intelligible to general readers, as well as useful to those who have a more intimate acquaintance with the subject. It comprises everything relating to the telegraph which the great majority of readers will care to know, while its orderly arrangement and its copious Table of Contents and Index make

it a convenient manual for reference. An elementary treatise on electricity, descriptions of the various telegraph-instruments used at different periods or in different places, the various applications of the telegraph, the construction of telegraph-lines, terrestrial magnetism, and galvanism, all come within his plan; and nearly every topic is illustrated with woodcuts, well engraved, and printed in the best manner.

9. — *History of the Town of Gloucester, Cape Ann, including the Town of Rockport.* By JOHN J. BABSON. Gloucester: Procter Brothers. 1860. 8vo. pp. xi. and 610.

GLOUCESTER is one of the oldest towns in this Commonwealth, and was incorporated only twelve years after the settlement of Boston. But before that period the facilities which it offered for carrying on the fisheries had attracted notice; and as early as 1623 an attempt was made to establish a permanent fishing-station on the western shore of its principal harbor. This attempt failed of success, and after the colony had dragged out a precarious existence for about three years, the station was abandoned. For several years afterward the history of Gloucester is involved in much obscurity; and it is doubtful when the first permanent settlement was made, though Mr. Babson is inclined to place it in 1633. In that year, it is believed, a small party crossed the Bay from Plymouth for the purpose of establishing a fishing-station; and some members of this party are supposed to have remained at Gloucester. They were joined by immigrants from other places, and in 1642 the number of residents was large enough to justify incorporation. A considerable number of these later settlers established themselves at such a distance from the shore as to warrant the belief that they did not look to the fisheries as the chief means of support; and it was not until many years afterward that the inhabitants again became largely engaged in this uncertain business. With the revival of prosperity after the formation of the Constitution of the United States, their attention was again directed to it; and so many persons engaged in it that in 1810 a petition was presented to the Massachusetts Legislature for a modification of the militia laws, apparently on the ground that they operated unfavorably on the interests of the fishermen. Accordingly, in the early part of 1811, an act was passed exempting fishermen, while actually employed as such in the service of any citizen of the United States, from the performance of militia duty; and this act remained in force until October, 1814, when it was repealed. This petition and the exemption to which it led curiously illustrate the ex-